Fighting the Guerilla in Iraq:

Tactical Insights from the 4th Infantry Division

Who are we fighting?

- What does the enemy look like?
- How can he hurt us?
- How can we hurt him?

What does the enemy look like?

The Islamic
Ultra-conservative

Upper Tier
The Command and Control

Middle Tier
The Body Guards and Organizers

Lower Tier
Trigger Pullers

The Three Tiers

Common themes among Iraqi insurgent forces

Upper Tier – The Command and Control

- Had some importance in society before war
- Well-guarded by Middle Tier
- Provides inspiration if not direct leadership

The Three Tiers

Middle Tier – The Bodyguards and Commanders

- Usually blood relatives of the Upper Tier
- Often leaves tracks while covering the Upper Tier
- Provides weapons and transport
- May lead attacks to encourage the Lower Tier

The Three Tiers

Common themes among Iraqi insurgent forces

Lower Tier – The ‘Trigger-pullers’

- **The ‘Young and stupid’ proving their manhood**
- **The poor man after a fast buck**
- **The [illegible]s [illegible]**

How can he hurt ?

Favorite Area Weapons

Roadside Bomb (IED)
Rocket Propelled

Favorite Point Weapon

Terror Attacks
TV, News, Photos, Internet

How can we hurt him?

Close Battle – what he fears the most

Counter-ambush – ‘Salt Lick’ operations

Triangulation – ‘Catfish Trap’

Deep Battle – Taking away his strengths

Counter-bomb ops

How can we hurt him?

Deep Battle – Take away his strengths (cont.)

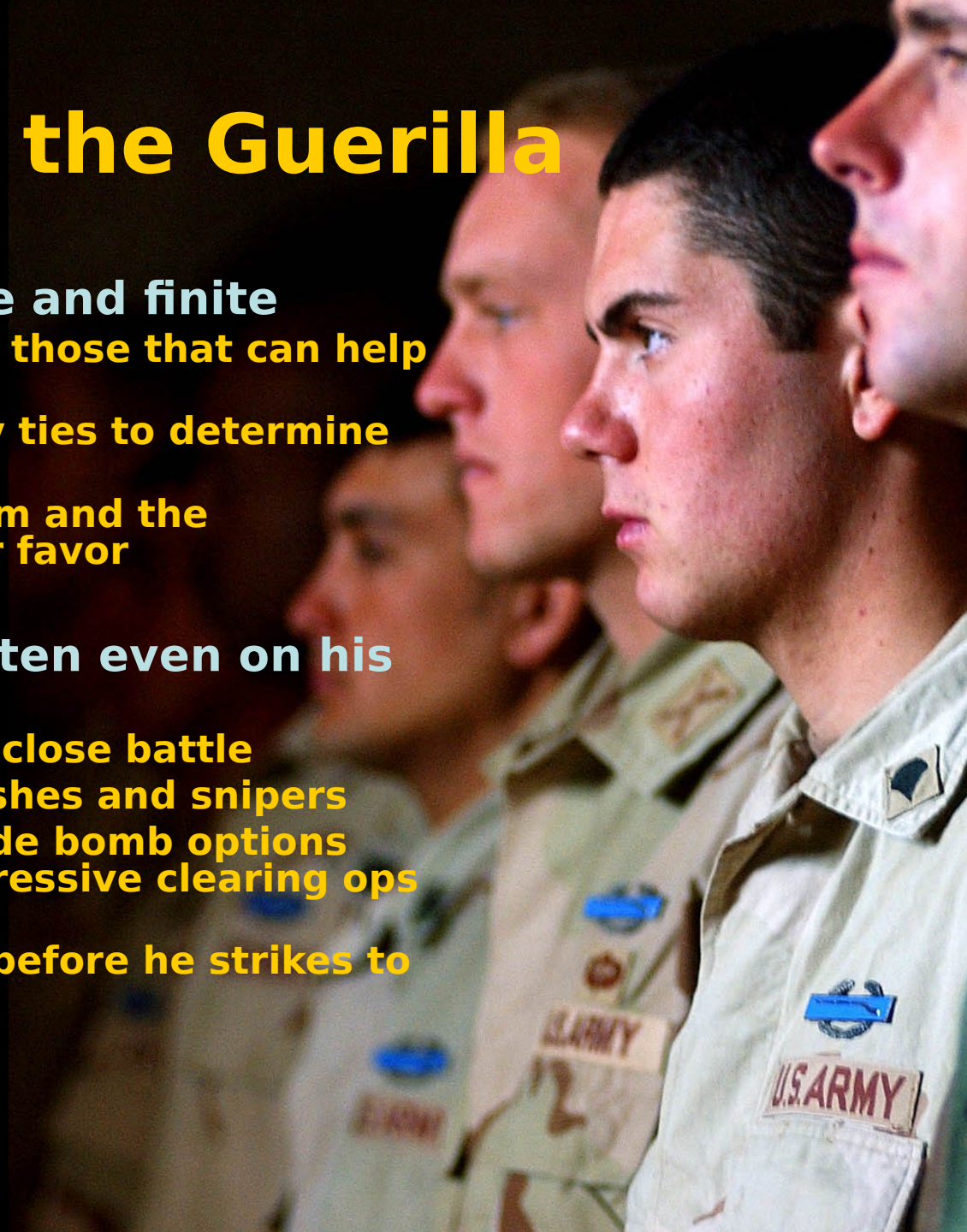
The Media (IO) – Tell the story or someone else will

Be honest

Be open

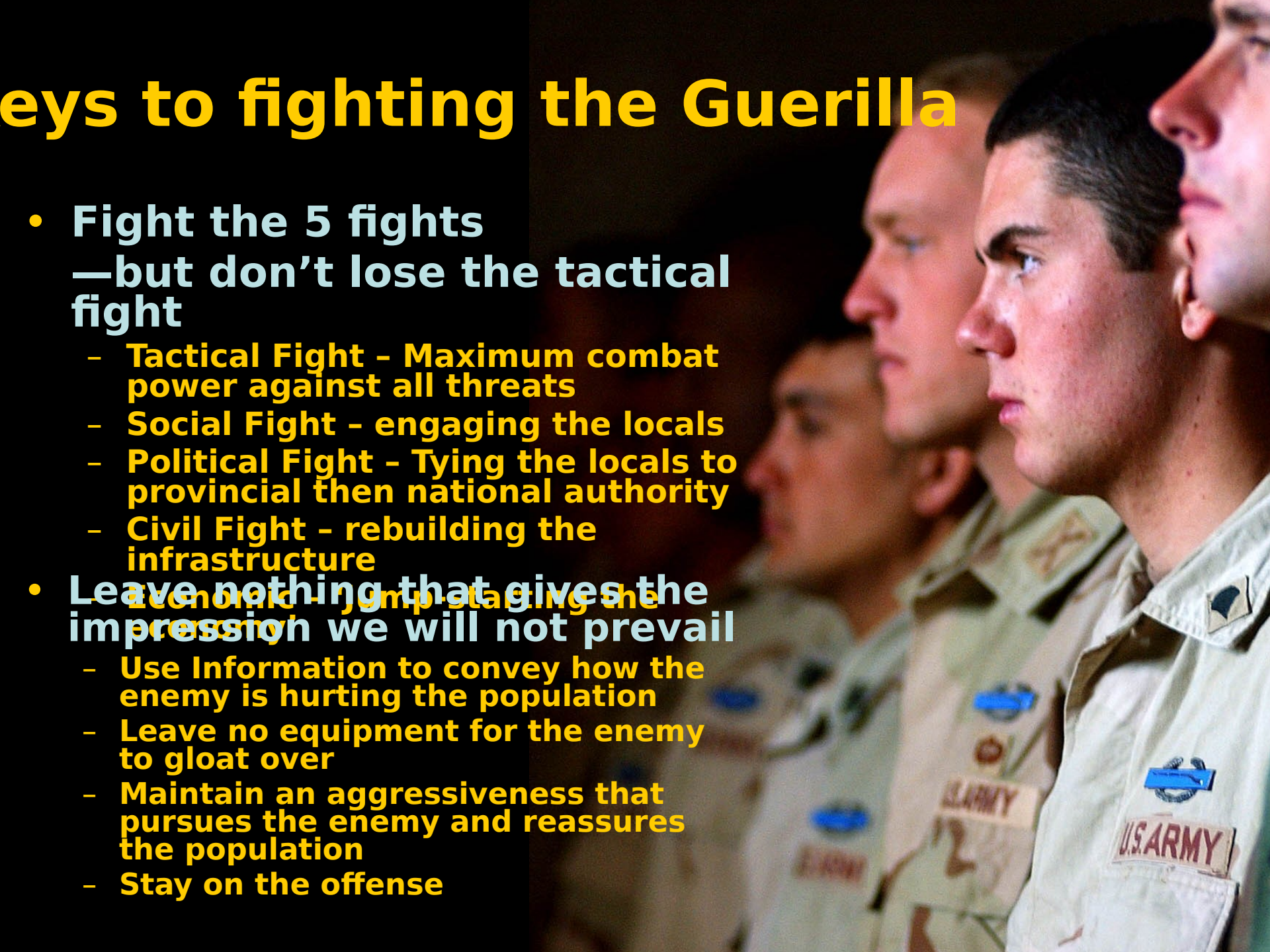
eys to fighting the Guerilla

- The enemy is definable and finite
  - Learn who he is and use those that can help you identify him
  - Find out his likely family ties to determine his safe harbor options
  - Keep the pressure on him and the momentum builds in our favor
- The enemy can be beaten even on his own ground
  - Give him what he fears: close battle
  - Go after him with ambushes and snipers
  - Disrupt his likely roadside bomb options with ambushes and aggressive clearing ops where they matter
  - Thin him out with raids before he strikes to disrupt him
  - Stay on the offense



eys to fighting the Guerilla

- Fight the 5 fights —but don't lose the tactical fight
  - Tactical Fight – Maximum combat power against all threats
  - Social Fight – engaging the locals
  - Political Fight – Tying the locals to provincial then national authority
  - Civil Fight – rebuilding the infrastructure
  - Economic – jump-starting the economy
- Leave nothing that gives the impression we will not prevail
  - Use Information to convey how the enemy is hurting the population
  - Leave no equipment for the enemy to gloat over
  - Maintain an aggressiveness that pursues the enemy and reassures the population
  - Stay on the offense



Tanks

- Tanks are always useful
  - Presence is a deterrent
  - Unmatched firepower
  - Survive most bomb / mine attacks
  - Range and optics useful in right areas

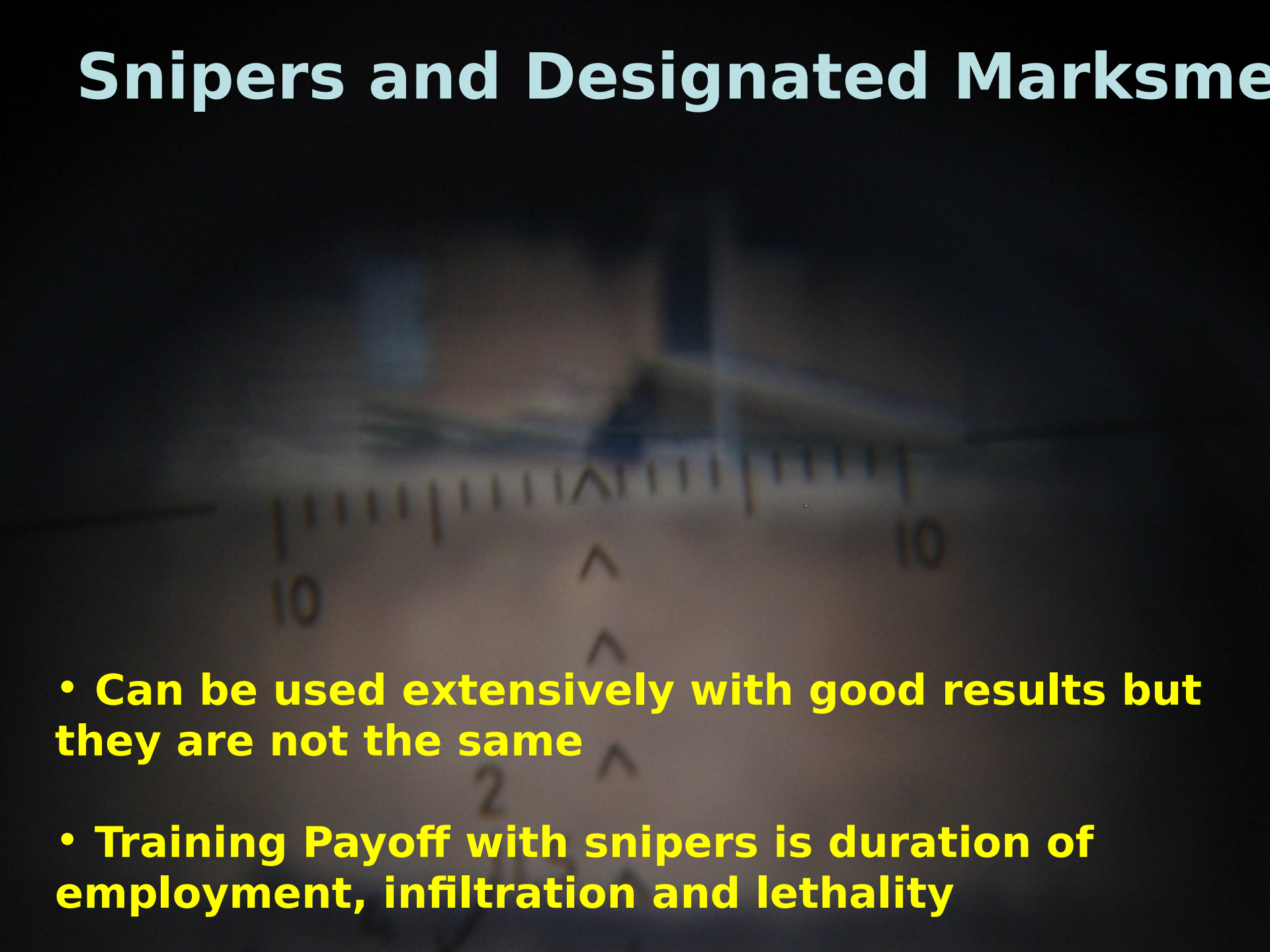
- Training Challenges
  - Armored and Infantry units working together must understand the different tempos involved
  - Urban warfare training for the tank crews was lacking and forced units to create on-the-spot TTPs they should have trained on earlier
  - Ground / vehicle communication had to be solved using off-the-shelf technology

Bradleys

- Do what they were designed to do
  - Presence is a deterrent
  - Effective weapons
  - Good mobility for Infantry

- Some observations
  - They work best when they are employed with their Infantry
  - ODS BFVs have inherent blind spots making them vulnerable to RPGs
  - Armored protection is only good for small arms - this must be remembered as RPGs and mines will quickly defeat them. Shoe Box armor creates a danger to dismounted Infantry

Snipers and Designated Marksme



- **Can be used extensively with good results but they are not the same**

- **Training Payoff with snipers is duration of employment, infiltration and lethality**

Indirect Fires

- Mortars are vital to counter an insurgency – but not how you think
  - Bang and blast are great deterrents
  - Destructiveness of rounds is great for a variety of targets
  - H & I missions reduced enemy indirect activity by 75%
- Enemy indirect weapons are used to harass and can be destroyed
  - ‘Shoot & Scoot’ enemy plus Time of Flight challenge makes counter-battery less effective
  - Enemy mortars are not a major factor but a nuisance demanding attention
  - Crater analysis, triangulation and ambush are best means to destroy
- Equipment & Training – don’t fix what isn’t broke and don’t ignore what is
  - The 120mm mortar itself is very reliable along with the ammunition
  - Don’t change the way we train our mortarmen – it’s working
  - Funnel energy in fixing the few things we know we need vice offering some new thing we wonder if we need

Attack Aviation

- Armed helicopter support is very effective, especially from Kiowa Warrior

- Helicopters are best controlled by company commanders

- Use of helicopters to cover blind spots as units advance is very effective

- Helicopters can often compromise a raid if staged too soon

Questions?